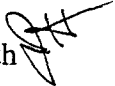


CALFED BAY-DELTA PROGRAM

Office Memorandum

Date: 12/24/97
To: Rick Woodard
From: Judy Heath 
Subject: Agricultural Impacts

I have been struck by the fact that, in the draft PEIS/EIR that I and other staff have just reviewed, the issue of conversion of up to 250,000 agricultural acres is addressed in a manner that does not give the reader the sense that CALFED is sincerely concerned about the impacts. Some of this language is intended to be addressed through comments the reviewers submitted. However, realizing the Program has consistently received criticism as being insensitive to agricultural interests, I have been thinking about what more we can do to strengthen our Program in this regard.

As part of its implementation strategy, CALFED management should explicitly recognize that impacts on agricultural lands are unavoidable if the Program is to be implemented, but that CALFED intends to take these impacts very seriously. Implementation of the Program will be accomplished with care being given to avoid or minimize impacts on agricultural interests. To assist us in this ongoing review and planning, a standing Agricultural Coordination Council can be developed to advise and assist CALFED at each step of Program implementation to help assure Program benefits extend to agriculture, and that Program impacts to agriculture are minimized. The Council will be asked to review all proposed CALFED activities that would affect agricultural interests, and to formulate plans and recommendations for protecting agricultural interests consistent with successfully implementing the Program. The Chair of the Council might be the Director of the Department of Food and Agriculture. The Council will report directly to the executive management of the Program implementation authority (CALFED or its successor).

The benefits of this approach would include:

- Sends a clear message to the agricultural community that CALFED understands the level of impact to agricultural interests, and is serious about minimizing impacts,
- Provides assurance in the form of continuing involvement and empowerment of agricultural interests in CALFED decision making.